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BULLETIN OF THE CENTER FOR CHILDREN'S BOOKS

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EXPLANATION OF CODE SYMBOLS USED
WITH ANNOTATIONS

- * Asterisks denote books of special distinction.
- R Recommended.
- Ad Additional book of acceptable quality for collections needing more material in the area.
- M Marginal book that is so slight in content or has so many weaknesses in style or format that it should be given careful consideration before purchase.
- NR Not recommended.
- SpC Subject matter or treatment will tend to limit the book to specialized collections.
- SpR A book that will have appeal for the unusual reader only. Recommended for the special few who will read it.

Except for pre-school years, reading range is given for grade rather than for age of child.

C.U. Curricular Use.

D.V. Developmental Values.

* * *

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Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO • GRADUATE LIBRARY SCHOOL

Volume 39

JULY-AUGUST, 1986

Number 11

New Titles for Children and Young People

Adler, Carole S. *Kiss the Clown*. Houghton/Clarion, 1986. ISBN 0-89919-419-2. 178p. \$12.95.

Ad 7-9 Viki has come from Guatemala, where her father is a missionary, to stay with Aunt Claudette (a librarian, and single) and attend high school in a town in upstate New York. She begins dating Marc (self-centered achiever) but comes to realize his older brother Joel is a much nicer person and falls in love with him. (Joel is dyslexic, discouraged, generous, kind to all, and he continues to be silent about his love for Viki out of loyalty to his brother.) Viki is worried by news of her mother's behavior, for Mother is apathetic, only happy when she has a visitor, and Viki dislikes some of these men. Adler is a competent writer, and, as do many of her books, this gives insight into a young person's reactions to familial problems; unfortunately, all of the reiterated concern about her parents is seen from a distance and from Viki's viewpoint, so that it strikes a monotone note that is not really integrated into the basic story, which is a triangular love story with the material on dyslexia as a special angle. Characterization is excellent, and the writing style, including dialogue, is smooth and controlled.

D.V. Adaptability; Handicaps, adjustment to

Allen, Laura Jean. *Where Is Freddy?* written and illus. Laura Jean Allen. Harper, 1986. Library ed. ISBN 0-06-020099-5; Trade ed. ISBN 0-06-020098-7. 60p. (An I Can Read Book) Library ed. \$9.89; Trade ed. \$8.95.

Ad 1-3 Detectives Rollo and Tweedy, mice, take on the mysterious case of Mrs. Twombly's missing grandson Freddy. "Fear not. The child will be found." Clues are everywhere, or rather, nowhere: forty coat hangers, five sheets, laundry basket, driving goggles and scarf—all missing from Mrs. Twombly's elaborate mouse mansion. The detective work is slightly plodding—a few too many red herrings—but the three-color illustrations are nicely detailed and witty.

Amari, Suad. *Cooking the Lebanese Way*. ISBN 0-8225-0913-X. 47p.

Bacon, Josephine. *Cooking the Israeli Way*. ISBN 0-8225-0912-1. 51p.

Both books are illus. with photographs by Robert L. and Diane Wolfe; Lerner, 1986; (Easy Menu Ethnic Cookbooks); \$8.95.

R 6-10 Like the numerous other books in this ethnic cookbook series, these two start out with a brief history of their authors' respective countries, an introduction to cooking utensils and cooking terms, and authentic sample menus with pronunciation guides before launching into the recipes themselves. The photographs and layout are attractive and the selections both typical and tempting; recipes occasionally call for canned or pre-packaged food (in the Israeli "Salat Russi," for instance), but there is heavier reliance on fresh ingredients, including a balance of dairy products, chicken or fish, vegetables, and fruit. A reminder of safety rules, a metric conversion chart, and a table of measures are appended, along with an index.

Ashabranner, Brent. *Children of the Maya: A Guatemalan Indian Odyssey*; illus. with photographs by Paul Conklin. Dodd, 1986. ISBN 0-396-08786-8. 97p. \$12.95.

R
5-9
* The most intensely focused and moving of all the reportage in this writer-photographer team's series on U.S. minorities provides brief background on the political dynamics behind the genocide of Mayan Indians at the hands of the Guatemalan army. Most of the book is devoted to the stories told by survivors of village massacres, their escapes, experiences as refugees through Mexico and across the border, and their resettlement in Indiantown, Florida, a population center for black, Hispanic, and native American migrant workers. Both the narrative and the photography are informal but clear; as a history and current events resource, this gives not only information but also a sense of immediate involvement in a situation too close and too tragic to be ignored.

Bahr, Amy C. *It's Okay to Say No*. ISBN 0-448-15328-9.

Sometimes It's Okay to Tell Secrets. ISBN 0-448-15325-4.

What Should You Do When...? ISBN 0-448-15327-0.

Your Body is Your Own. ISBN 0-448-15326-2.

All books are illus. by Frederick Bennet Green; Grosset, 1986; 27p. \$4.95.

Ad
K-2 A "Note to Parents" is included at the beginning of each of the books in this series, designed for parents to use with children. The four titles cover material that is included in most of the many books on the subject of what may be unsafe and what to do if you are a young child who is propositioned, threatened, offered a bribe, abused, etc. Each of the books, simply and stiffly written and illustrated by pedestrian illustrations, focuses, as the titles indicate, on one aspect of children's rights or appropriate responses. Sensible, but each text seems repetitive and overextended.

Blocksmas, Mary. *Amazing Mouths and Menus*; illus. by Lee J. Ames. Prentice-Hall, 1986. ISBN 0-13-023854-6. 46p. \$12.95.

M
3-5 The facts here are straightforward and useful, but organizing them by days of the week seems arbitrary and confusing. After an introduction to basic characteristics of mammal, reptile, fish, and bird mouths, the author lists a "menu" for Monday—tree parts, deep sea coral, nuts and seeds—and describes several herbivores that eat them, including rodents, beaver, parrotfish, and the cockatiel; but rats, which are listed specifically, are omnivorous, and the principle of chewing with beak or front teeth gets lost in the disparate examples. Tuesday through Sunday suffer much the same fate. There is also occasional condescension in the text ("How clever of you!") and some unscientific writing ("All in all, reptiles have a rather repulsive way of eating"). The black-and-white drawings are competently rendered, and the diagrams are good. On the whole, however, Lauber's book (reviewed below) on the same subject is superior.

C.U. Biology

Bolognese, Don. *Pen & Ink*. ISBN 0-531-10133-9.

Pencil. ISBN 0-531-10134-7.

Both books are written and illus. by Don Bolognese and Elaine Raphael; Watts, 1986; 60p.; (The Illustrator's Library); \$9.90.

R
5-
* An unusually articulate discussion of the materials, techniques, practice, and vision required to make pen-and-ink and pencil illustrations. Although some prior knowledge is assumed (templates are mentioned but not defined, for instance, in *Pen and Ink*), most of the explanations are simple without becoming boring: look for the stories of a face; observe the range of textures possible with varied pen tips in five versions of the same drawing; explore the effects of linear, line-and-tone, and tonal drawings in pencil. Although the series introductions are the same for each volume, the texts are carefully tailored to the different media. All of the points made are well illustrated in the accompanying drawings; the description of form and structure in the pencil book, for

instance, is rendered all the more lucid by the accompanying sketches. Both books are carefully designed to show what they tell. These are basic lessons in art appreciation as well as creation.

C.U. Art—study and teaching; Illustrations—pen and ink; Illustrations—line drawings

Bowman, Margret. *Blue-Footed Booby: Bird of the Galapagos*; written and illus. by Margret Bowman; ad. by Nicholas Millhouse. Walker, 1986. Library ed. ISBN 0-8027-6629-3; Trade ed. ISBN 0-8027-6628-5. 28p. Library ed. \$11.85; Trade ed. \$11.95.

R
2-4 Despite the choppy writing style, this description of a seabird of the Galapagos Archipelago, the blue-footed booby, is interesting because of the creature itself, the unusual setting, the fact that information about other flora and fauna of the region is provided. This has a narrative framework and follows a typical pattern in books about an animal for younger children; it describes the life of the animal from birth to its attainment of independence, giving information en route about nesting, feeding, flight, etc. The romanticized but accurately detailed pictures show the colony of blue-footed boobies and the changes in appearance of the bird, who is referred to as “Booby.”

C.U. Science

Caines, Jeanette Franklin. *Chilly Stomach*; illus. by Pat Cummings. Harper, 1986. Library ed. ISBN 0-06-020977-1; Trade ed. ISBN 0-06-020976-3. 32p. Library ed. \$11.89; Trade ed. \$11.95.

M
K-3 Sandy is not comfortable around her Uncle Jim: “Sometime he hugs me and kisses me on the lips, and I get a chilly stomach.” Jim never does anything overt, nothing Sandy’s parents would see as being amiss; nevertheless, “When Uncle Jim tickles me, I don’t like it.” While this picture book gets high marks for its consistently child-like perspective, there are serious problems with its resolution. During a sleepover at best friend Jill’s house (Sandy always tries to go there when Uncle Jim stays over), Sandy confides her secret fears. Jill says she is going to tell her mother, and that Sandy should tell her parents, too. Sandy is afraid to tell: “Maybe Mommy and Daddy won’t like me anymore.” Last page: “But I want them to know.” The picture shows a fearful Sandy, Dad waving goodbye to Jim, and Mom picking up the phone. The implication, one supposes, is that Jill’s mother is calling, but this is too subtle for young children. More of a problem is that Sandy’s fears—that her parents won’t believe her or love her—are not resolved. The author’s message may be that it doesn’t matter how scared you are, *tell someone*, but the abrupt finish will only lead readers to think that a page is missing. Cummings’ illustrations are better than the text: intensely bright colors and a dramatic use of space make each page a vivid tableau.

Cebulash, Mel. *Hot Like the Sun*. Lerner, 1986. ISBN 0-8225-0729-3. 107p. \$9.95.

NR
7-9 Sixteen-year-old Terry Tyndale, wholesome, dependable, attractive, and just slightly square, is the narrator. When pretty Sherri rings his doorbell and asks him to help solve a mystery: who has stolen from pink-haired Jimmy the valuable coin he “borrowed” from the collection of his friend Karen’s father while the latter was out of town. The answer is so obvious that it’s hard to believe Terry doesn’t see it as he follows clues and woos Sherri with equal vigor. The plot is weak and the characterization superficial, but what really detracts from the book’s worth (assuming that the action and minimal suspense give it worth) is the style, which is flat and contrived.

Chalmers, Mary. *Six Dogs, Twenty-Three Cats, Forty-Five Mice, and One Hundred Sixteen Spiders*; written and illus. by Mary Chalmers. Harper, 1986. Library ed. ISBN 0-06-021189-X; Trade ed. ISBN 0-06-021188-1. 28p. Library ed. \$10.89; Trade ed. \$10.95.

Ad 3-5 yrs. Why anyone would *want* the 190 pets enumerated in the title is never explained, but Annie Tree, the main character, seems to cherish each and every one, even the two shy spiders (named simply "Dears") that live in the teapot in spite of the constant cleaning required. Annie's one friend, Priscilla, can't quite bear the mess, even in a guest house Annie builds just for her visits. In the end, however, everyone's reconciled (although one wonders how the cats and mice quite got along in the first place). The story is really an excuse for the pictures, which are softly alluring watercolors that detail a bevy of creatures in context of dainty domestic or lawn scenes. For most children, the whole idea will seem a dream of animal companions (and adult indulgence) come true.

D.V. Friendship values

Cohen, Daniel. *ESP: The New Technology*. Messner, 1986. ISBN 0-671-61151-8. 116p. illus. with photographs. \$9.59.

M 7-9 In a text that is as determinedly impartial as it is florid, Cohen discusses the history of parapsychological research, some of the major workers in the field, and some of the findings—including those that have been proved to be fraudulent. The subject is one that interests many readers, both those who are convinced of the existence of extrasensory perception, and those who are dubious about it. The book is weakened by the use of photographs of poor quality, errors in the text or in captions ("Only near the start . . . are their any. . ." or dubbing a leader in the field "Dr. J.B. Rhinde") and the lack of an index to give access to the contents. A bibliography provides a partial list of sources.

Cole, Brock. *The Giant's Toe*; written and illus. by Brock Cole. Farrar, 1986. ISBN 0-374-32559-6. 31p. \$12.95.

Ad 5-7 yrs. Like Haley's *Jack and the Bean Tree*, reviewed below, this is an Americanized version of the English tale, but this one is a spoof. The giant looks remarkably like W.C. Fields (a visual pun in itself, as the setting is his garden), and when he cuts off his toe with a hoe, the toe becomes a mischievous midget that tricks the giant into baking his hen that laid the golden eggs and throwing his golden harp down a hole all the way to China. Fortunately the toe boy also gets rid of a mean-looking kid named Jack who comes to chop up the giant, so the giant and his toe live happily ever after. Cole's watercolor paintings are funny and full of action, although, with all due respect, the toe looks more like Tom Thumb and one has to wonder, in the opening scenes, how the giant could have cut off his toe without cutting his shoe, which is still whole. On balance, though, this is an offbeat story that would be entertaining to use in context with Joseph Jacobs' version.

Cole, Joanna. *A Dog's Body*; illus. with photographs by Jim and Ann Monteith. Morrow, 1986. Library ed. ISBN 0-688-04154-X; Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-04153-1. 42p. Library ed. \$11.88; Trade ed. \$11.75.

R K-3 Like others in the author's series (*A Frog's Body*, etc.), this is a first-rate introduction for younger children. Cole emphasizes physical function over anatomical description, answering children's most frequent questions about dogs: how can they run so fast, why do they pant, what do different barks mean? In the simple but thorough text, Cole discusses dogs' lupine ancestry, how different breeds were developed, why certain senses are more important than others. The many black-and-white photographs and diagrams are clear, well-placed, and always informative.

C.U. Biology

Colman, Hila. *Happily Ever After*. Scholastic, 1986. ISBN 0-590-33551-0. 154p. Paper ed. \$2.25.

Ad 8-10 Like Camilla in Sandra Scoppetone's *Trying Hard to Hear you* (reviewed in the February, 1975 issue), Melanie is in love with a boy who is sweet and tenderly affectionate but who just doesn't respond sexually. Melanie, unlike Camilla, has known Paul since they were best friends in second grade. Many readers will suspect what Melanie does not: Paul is gay. Indeed, when she talks to him about their marriage, a future event she's assumed will occur, Paul gently, painfully tells her. Disbelief is followed by unhappy acceptance, but the anguish remains. Melanie tries to help, through her parents, who are close to Paul's parents, ease the tension in Paul's family. The story is competently written, with good balance of dialogue and exposition, convincing characters, and a believably inconclusive ending, for Paul is leaving to try independence and a new life style. Colman's conclusion is the message: "Loving Paul had been no waste. She was lucky to have him for a friend. He had already showed her something about honesty and integrity. 'If you don't have that, you can't love anyone,' Paul had mused, and she knew that he was right." Never judgmental, the story is weakened by the slow development of a situation most readers will anticipate long before Paul tells Melanie.

D.V. Friendship values

Cooney, Caroline B. *Don't Blame the Music*. Pacer/Putnam, 1986. ISBN 0-448-47778-5. \$13.95. Reviewed from galleys.

Ad 7-9 Although her relationships with friends and her involvement in school affairs are important to the narrator, Susan, her life during the period covered by this story is dominated by Ashley. Twenty-five, the sister who had been Susan's loving protector has come home after a failed career as a rock singer. Bitter, sullen, and destructive, Ash spoils personal and family property, is viciously insulting to Susan and their parents, and is clearly in desperate need of therapy. The weakest aspect of the book is that it takes so long for her parents to suggest it, tolerating her expressed hate with what seems weakness rather than patience. Meanwhile Susan is learning to cope with an arrogant (rather stereotypical) girl rival, to see the true nature of each of the boys she likes, to understand the reasons for Ashley's aggression and hostility. This has well-defined characters and it explores the ramifications of a familial situation in which there is one member so abrasive that there is stress in all parts of the lives of others. This is not as impressive in pace or development as Cooney's previous book, particularly because of the long period of the acceptance of Ashley's excesses, but it touches on issues important to adolescent development, and it certainly has dramatic moments.

D.V. Family relations; Sisters

Cooper, Clare. *Earthchange*. Lerner, 1986. ISBN 0-8225-0730-7. 96p. \$9.95.

R 6-8 "Don't ever let anybody know that you go walking," Grandmother had said, and Rose understood that Boss, who ruled their tiny colony, would punish her if she did. Or if he knew that Grandmother had taught her to read. When an accident killed Boss and the others, Grandmother sent Rose on a dangerous mission, which brought her into encounters with other, hostile colonies and with ferocious animals. When she reached her goal, Rose found that there were people who were friendly, that she was part of the history of these new, highly educated people, that there was a reason for the devastation of Earth and possibly a remedy. There are many stories about a primitive state of affairs on an Earth that has been self-destructive, and here the concept of a history after Things Went Wrong is an effective one. The author is a member of Greenpeace, but her message never overshadows her story, told with good pace and suspense.

D.V. Courage

Cross, Gillian. *The Prime Minister's Brain*; illus. by Sally Burgess. Oxford/Merrimack, 1986. ISBN 0-19-217489-9. 192p. \$9.95.

Ad 4-6 In a sequel to *The Demon Headmaster* (reviewed in the September, 1983 issue) Dinah and her friends and siblings are again embroiled in a dangerous adventure in which they pit their wits against those of a power-hungry, evil, brutal hypnotist, the former Headmaster. This time Dinah is one of a group of computer-skilled children duped into a mass effort at what they think is a contest. What it proves to be is the Headmaster's effort to crack a code (or rather to have one of the bright children do so) so that he can get into the computer and the brain of the Prime Minister. This has the same kind of action, suspense, and pace as the first book, but it's less cohesive, partly because the chapters alternately move from Dinah (inside a sealed, huge building) to the others who are attempting to rescue her. This technique can work, but it doesn't here, primarily because the action in each part does not affect or contribute to the other.

Daly, Maureen. *Acts of Love*. Scholastic, 1986. ISBN 0-590-33873-0. \$12.95. Reviewed from galleys.

M 6-9 After a long silence, a popular author returns to adolescent fiction. Alas, the book is replete with flowery phrases (referring to the splendor of the town's hotel a century and a half earlier, "The Zenith Arms had been a small, perfect hotel with a wide veranda with rocking chairs and gentlemen from the South in white gloves to serve tea or mint juleps. . . .") or with solecisms such as "Like most of the girls, her eye makeup was heavy. . . ." There are three strands: teenage Retta's love affair with tall, rugged Dallas Dobson from Texas, the fight her parents and other residents put up (in vain) to save their land from being taken over by the state, and the family's move to California—where Dallas gets a summer job. The pace is adequate, the characters are believable if superficially drawn; the weaknesses of the story are the style and the fact that the components of the plot don't fuse.

Demi. *Demi's Count the Animals 1,2,3*; written and illus. by Demi. Grosset, 1986. ISBN 0-448-18980-1. 47p. \$9.95.

R 2-5 yrs. * Here's a counting book that is an effective teaching tool, with clear correlation between words, digits, and pictures and with attractive illustrations of animals. Some of the paintings (chiefly bright pastel colors) are ornamented (elephants in two-color print design) while others are realistic. The numbers go from one to twenty, and Demi has added two ways to count to one hundred. A sample of the text: "1 ONE How many rhinos/on the run?/It's easy to see/there's only one. Count one rhinoceros." Color, humor, and the appeals of rhyme, rhythm, and a parade of animals equal a winner.

Duke, Kate. *Bedtime*. ISBN 0-525-44207-3.

Clean-Up Day. ISBN 0-525-44208-1.

The Playground. ISBN 0-525-44206-5.

What Bounces? ISBN 0-525-44209-X.

All books are written and illus. by Kate Duke; Dutton, 1986; 10p. \$2.95.

R 1-3 yrs. Like many of the other board books recently published, this is a set of four; the paintings are bright, lively, and humorous, reminiscent but not imitative of the work of Rosemary Wells. The protagonists are guinea pigs—a patient mother, a hyperactive child, occasional minor characters. In *Bedtime*, the large print reads, on separate pages, "Time for bed," "Toilet time," "Bath time," and so on until the child's in bed. Save for the child's pajamas there is no clothing worn in this or the other books, so the audience may wonder why the pajamas and why, in *Clean-Up Day*, there's a laundry picture labelled "Dirty clothes." A minor flaw, that, in a set of funny, clever books that have the appeal of the familiar and, in *What Bounces?*, the bonus of a concept book.

Dygaard, Thomas J. *Halfback Tough*. Morrow, 1986. ISBN 0-68-05925-2. 210p. \$11.75.

Ad 6-9 At his old school, Worthington, Joe had been one of the tough delinquents who scoffed at the goody-goody football players. Now, he's a star on the team of his new school, and his higher grades reflect the new attitude that being accepted by a group has engendered. Given the situation, it is fairly clear that there's going to be some cause for Joe's behavior to be suspect and that he will both prove his innocence and recognize the fact that he's appreciated for what he is. (In addition, of course, to being a great football player.) This is adequately written and adequately—if predictably—structured. Characters are rather patterned, and the book has a narrow focus, with little outside of football, but sports fans should enjoy the action of the game sequences.

D.V. Self-confidence

Geller, Mark. *My Life in the Seventh Grade*. Harper, 1986. Library ed. ISBN 0-06-021982-3; Trade ed. ISBN 0-06-021979-3. 121p. Library ed. \$10.89; Trade ed. \$10.95.

Ad 5-7 This is Marvin Berman's record of his year in seventh grade in a junior high school in Skokie, Illinois. It's flip, it's funny, and it will undoubtedly evoke many a recognition reflect and be enjoyed for all these reasons. The plotting is adequate, loosely knitting Marvin's interest in baseball, his shifting relationships with his best friend Danny and with the plump boy who's often the butt of Danny's teasing, his acquisition of a girl friend and the friendship of the school tough. There's less emphasis on parents and teachers, but there is some to give balance to the story. Characterization lacks depth and tends toward the stereotypical; the book is weakened, also, by the static quality of the dialogue.

Gerstein, Mordicai. *Tales of Pan*; written and illus. by Mordicai Gerstein. Harper, 1986. Library ed. ISBN 0-06-021997-1; Trade ed. ISBN 0-06-021996-3. 63p. Library ed. \$12.89; Trade ed. \$12.95.

R 5-8 yrs. With a light and lively tone suited to Pan's more innocently mischievous moments, Gerstein adapts 13 Greek myths centered on his escapes, including his invention of panic, his music contest with Apollo, and his part in King Midas' acquiring donkey ears. A foreward sets the storytelling scene by neatly summarizing, in two pages, Pan's place in the family of gods, who "lived on top of Mount Olympus, under great craggy clouds that looked like whipped cream." Pan's dedication to noise and naughty confusion will immediately appeal to children, and Gerstein has successfully joined the stories with thematic characteristics and references such as Pan's "panic yell," which is important to several episodes. The art is as frothy and as fun as the text, with pastel and swirling soft line work weaving in and out of the text or sometimes covering the pages. This is a natural readaloud, an entertaining introduction to mythology for the very young, and an extension of the imaginary world into the real. The last two pages show Zeus' family in contemporary attire, sitting for their photograph, while Pan sneaks off with his pipes into Central Park. "YAAAAHHOOOOOYIPPEEEYIPPEEEYAAAAA-HOOOOO!"

C.U. Language arts; Reading aloud

Graham, Bob. *First There Was Frances*; written and illus. by Bob Graham. Bradbury, 1986. ISBN 0-02-737030-5. 31p. \$12.95.

R 3-5 yrs. Like Chalmers *Six Dogs*. . . , reviewed above, this capitalizes on a crowd of creatures, but this time in family context. Frances meets Graham, who shortly brings home a dog, who makes the perfect companion for the couple's first child and then second child, after which Grandma, a goat, two Guinea pigs, a canary, another goat, an alley cat, and various progeny of all of the above hurtle about the back garden. But with the advent of

the horses, "That's when they moved to the country." The scraggly-lined full-color illustrations document the mounting chaos in scenes like the one in which the cat's four legs have fallen through the guinea pigs' wire cage or the goat and the cat give tit for tat. There's none of the sentimental softness of the Chalmers book in this one, which stays true to the inherent havoc of the situation and will appeal, in addition, by virtue of its cumulative momentum, which has to serve as substitute for the missing story line.

Greenberg, Keith Elliot. *Bruce Springsteen*. ISBN 0-8225-1608-X. 30p.

Madonna. ISBN 0-8225-1606-3. 35p.

Mabery, D. L. *Julian Lennon*. ISBN 0-8225-1607-1. 35p.

Tina Turner. ISBN 0-8225-1609-8. 43p.

All books are Lerner, 1986; illus. with photographs; (Entertainment World); \$8.95.

Ad 5-9 These four brief biographies of rock superstars are not as glitzy as many, and the subjects are less ephemeral. Tina Turner, particularly, is shown to be the musical survivor she is because of effort and determination; in fact, most of the texts give enough background to convey the hard work behind the high climb. There are occasional lapses ("Bruce Springsteen and his band walked right into stardom") and vacuous statements ("It was incredible" he said. "It sounded like fun.") Yet on the whole, the physical and musical energy it takes to keep a star going comes through, as does the personality of each character, even down to the weight of sadness Julian Lennon has borne through neglect and grief, or the control both women feel proud to have achieved. The color photographs are more candid than usual promo shots; these will be consumed by fans.

Guthrie, Donna. *Grandpa Doesn't Know It's Me*; illus. by Katy Keck Arnsteen. Human Sciences Press, 1986. Trade ed. ISBN 0-89885-302-8; Paper ed. ISBN 0-89885-308-7. 29p. Trade ed. \$13.95; Paper ed. \$5.95.

R K-3 Almost all children are concerned with their own identity, and it is usually confusing, or even frightening to them, when a grandparent no longer recognizes them. It can be particularly traumatic when the relationship has been a close one. This book may help children understand and accept such a change. It is told by a child, it is simply written, and it describes the relentless progression of Alzheimer's disease. Grandpa had lived nearby, taught Elizabeth to ride a bicycle, and told her stories; as he became increasingly forgetful, it was clearly dangerous for him to be alone. When the story ends, Grandpa is spending time at a day-care center, living with Elizabeth and her parents, often confused or irrational. The book does not touch on what happens when a victim of this disease needs full-time professional supervision, and for the age of the intended audience, this is a wise decision. Despite the fact that the writing style is flat and the illustrations (peach-tinted line drawings, lots of hatching) pedestrian, this does a good job of explaining Alzheimer's disease and of explaining the disorientation it causes so that children realize that there is no rejection of them.

D.V. Grandparent-child relations

Haley, Gail E., ad. *Jack and the Bean Tree*; ad. and illus. by Gail E. Haley. Crown, 1986. ISBN 0-517-55717-7. 48p. \$12.95.

Ad 5-7 yrs. An Appalachian version closer to the English than to the Richard Chase tale with which some storytellers will be familiar, this is framed within a family gathering in which an old woman, Poppyseed, explains how she magically came by her stories. In this one, Jack trades the cow (absent in Chase), climbs the stalk, and finds himself in a Greco-Romantic setting with a giant named Ephicophilus. He steals tablecloth, hen, and harp (rifle, knife, and coverlet in Chase) and escapes with the giant crashed to a grease spot and Matilda, the giant's wife who took such a liking to Jack, left up in Skyland. (In most versions, the giant's wife is assumed to suffer the fate of all suckers—in Chase, to be "smashed up when the house landed.") It's too bad there are no notes

to the story. The art consists of heavily textured, page-and-a-half-spread paintings with text in the other half page. The deep colors work best in green landscape scenes; they get a bit jarring in the giants' palace. This is a fairly elaborate version, and the long text and heavy palette best suit it to children already familiar with the tale.

Hall, Lynn. *If Winter Comes*. Scribner, 1986. ISBN 0-684-18575-X. 119p. \$11.95.

Ad 7-10 "This is just another political thing, nothing to do with us. There's always some sort of crisis, you know that." It's Friday afternoon, and the crisis is nuclear; a small South American country has atomic missiles aimed at major U.S. cities, and is threatening to set them off on Saturday night. Steady couple Meredith and Barry, living in suburban Chicago, are afraid. They try to reassure and support each other, but while the crisis brings them closer together, it also bares the cracks in their relationship. Meredith tries desperately to hold on to life—she stops her veterinarian mother from putting an aged cat to sleep ("We've got a choice, with him.") while Barry almost welcomes destruction: "Most of his mind was terrified; the other part wanted it to come, longed for the drama, the adrenaline-pumping wild excitement of the end of the world." All their emotions are realistically developed, but Hall's perspective and plotting are too frequently sentimental: Meredith's separated parents come closer together, Barry finds solace in the company of an old woman in the Chicago ghetto. After the crisis is averted Meredith concludes, "I guess there's nothing like almost getting killed to make a person wise." Not a lot of depth here, but the subject will attract readers.

D.V. Boy-girl relations; Family relations

Hautzig, Deborah. *Why Are You So Mean to Me?* illus. by Tom Cooke. Random House, 1986. Library ed. ISBN 0-394-98060-3; Trade ed. ISBN 0-394-88060-9. 32p. (A Sesame Street Start-to-Read Book) Library ed. \$5.99; Trade ed. \$4.95.

Ad 1-2 The characters are Sesame Street muppets, which means that the illustration for this story about a child's feelings is a series of cartoons rather than art; bright and brash, they have some humor but fail to echo the sensitivity of the story. Grover is hurt when his classmates jeer at him for being so poor a batter. He takes his resentment out on a friend, but they soon straighten matters out, and later Grover's mother offers solace and candor: his batting may improve or it may not, but he'll always be good at being Grover and that's more important. The print is large, the spacing ample, the writing direct and simple, the plot adequately structured, the situation one most children will find familiar. Useful for reading aloud as well as for beginning independent readers.

D.V. Age-mate relations; Self-confidence

C.U. Reading, beginning

Hansen, Joyce. *Which Way Freedom?* Walker, 1986. Library ed. ISBN 0-8027-6636-6; Trade ed. ISBN 0-8027-6623-4. 120p. (Walker's American History Series for Young People) Library ed. \$12.85; Trade ed. \$12.95.

R 6-9 In a strong historical novel, Joyce Hansen describes the way in which one young black man, Obi, struggles over a period of three years (1861-1864) politically and ideologically toward the goal of being a free man. Hoping to find the mother he doesn't remember, reluctant to leave the few people who are almost family, Obi is determined to get away from his master, and he does so in a way that is exciting and believable. Obi (he spurns the surname of his owner, and eventually chooses a new last name) eventually joins a Union regiment and is one of the few to escape from the bloody battle at Fort Pillow, Tennessee. Hansen has made Obi real, emphasizing his tenacity and courage by showing it rather than declaring him a cardboard hero. He is himself, but he also exemplifies the commitment of all those who fought to be free, just as he illustrates the

contribution made by many black soldiers in the Civil War.

C.U. History—U.S.

D.V. Courage; Self-confidence

Hansen, Rosanna. *My First Book of Space*; written by Rosanna Hansen and Robert A. Bell; developed in conjunction with NASA. Messner, 1986. Library ed. ISBN 0-671-60621-2; Trade ed. ISBN 0-671-60262-4. 41p. illus. with photographs. Library ed. \$11.79; Trade ed. \$7.95.

R On a par with Seymour Simon's individual volumes about the moon and various
2-5 planets, this compacts a great deal of material covering the solar system generally, in simple, clear, and often comparative terms. The oversize format is spacious enough to accommodate impressively large color photographs and paintings offsetting factually condensed blocks of text. The diagrams and total organization, with sections clearly marked for browsing or specific reports, make this an excellent introduction.

C.U. Astronomy

Hayes, Sheila. *You've Been Away All Summer*. Lodestar, 1986. ISBN 0-525-67182-X. \$12.95. Reviewed from galleys.

R Set in Manhattan, this is a sequel to *The Carousel Horse*, in which Fran made friends
5-7 with Andrea, the rich girl she'd expected to hate because Mom was acting as cook at the summer home of Andrea's parents. Here, Fran finds that her best friend Sarah has also made a new friend—and Fran detests Marcie, feeling that she's stolen Sarah from her. This is a common situation in books about middle-grades girls, but it's better handled than in most such stories. The reactions and cross-reactions are often subtle and occasionally humorous; there is genuine tension/resolution, and the changes that occur are natural, emanating from personality and situation rather than imposed from without. A happy ending, yes, but not a sugary one.

D.V. Friendship values; Jealousy, overcoming

Hilton, Suzanne. *The World of Young Tom Jefferson*; illus. by William Sauts Bock. Walker, 1986. Library ed. ISBN 0-8027-6622-6; Trade ed. ISBN 0-8027-6621-8. 92p. Library ed. \$13.85; Trade ed. \$13.95.

R In a biography that is fictionalized with restraint and written with polish and author-
6-8 ity, Hilton focuses on Jefferson's childhood and his years as a young college student, although the final chapter gives a compressed account of his life and work as an adult. Despite the fact that Jefferson never emerges as a vibrant character, the text shows how childhood events and attitudes foreshadowed his later philosophy. One of the strong points of the book is the way the author brings in, at appropriate moments, a wealth of pertinent information about such subjects as medicine or education of the period. A chronology, an index, and a list headed, "Whatever Happened To...?" are provided.

C.U. History—U.S.

Hiscock, Bruce. *Tundra, the Arctic Land*; written and illus. by Bruce Hiscock. Atheneum, 1986. ISBN 0-689-31219-0. 135p. \$13.95.

R A storehouse of information, this blends natural history background on the Tundra
5-8 with the author's observations as he travels on a three-week camping trip in the brief Arctic summer. Trees, plants, birds, insects, animals, and even various peoples have all related in a delicate ecological balance for centuries until some recent upheavals due to the discovery and exploitation of oil and mineral deposits. Hiscock describes this ecological balance with particular attention to the specific details of surviving conditions of extreme, unrelieved cold. One truck rut over the tundra, for instance, can cause

uneven melting of the permafrost and create serious erosion of the land around it, affecting plant and animal life in a chain reaction. The style is smooth, as is the organization; the treatment, both scientific and personal; the approach, encompassing. The black-and-white illustrations and overall book design are strikingly handsome, the bibliography (juvenile books are marked), useful.

C.U. Nature study

Hughes, Frieda. *Getting Rid of Aunt Edna*; illus. by Ed Levine. Harper, 1986. Library ed. ISBN 0-06-025622-2; Trade ed. ISBN 0-06-025621-4. 74p. Library ed. \$10.89; Trade ed. \$11.50.

M 3-5 Aunt Edna is a witch whose spells go wrong and whose behavior is self-centered, so her visit to her sister Agatha is not particularly enjoyed by Agatha, also a witch, or by their niece Miranda who lives with Agatha. Fortunately, a spell Miranda dodges bounces back and turns Edna into a donkey. Like many first efforts, this has too many incidents and too many characters to be cohesive. It is not a smooth blending of fantasy and realism, although readers may enjoy the disaster humor and the talking animals in a crowded household. Overdone.

Kassem, Lou. *Middle School Blues*. Houghton, 1986. ISBN 0-395-39499-6. 181p. \$12.95.

Ad 6-8 Because she could find nothing in the library to help her prepare for going to middle school, Cindy writes, she's decided to produce her own book—so this is her record of the first year of middle school. It's an experience Cindy and her best friend Becca regard with apprehension, and at first it seems as though their fears are justified. But they do make friends, they learn to like boys, and Cindy finds that a teacher reputed to be a tartar is helpful. All of this is lightweight, palatable, and encouraging to readers approaching the middle school years. There is little substance or development, however, and the story is replete with such standard characters as the Class Snob and her toadies.

D.V. Age-mate relations; Teacher-pupil relations

Kennedy, X. J. *Brats*; illus. by James Watts. Margaret K. McElderry, 1986. ISBN 0-689-50392-X. 42p. \$11.95.

R 2-4 Forty-two brief verses, mostly rhymed quatrains, celebrate or denigrate the actions of mischievous children, many of whom meet fearful fates. These are bright, tight, and inventive, with plenty of playground chanting potential: "On his motorbike Lars stands/ Roaring past us—'Look! no hands!'/ Soon with vacant handle bars/ Back the bike roars. Look, no Lars!" Word choices are simple, with reliance on inventive situations, as when one young brat drenches the T.V. set to find out whether "flash floods/ Turn soap opera to suds." Another imp, Sue, sticks a pig to the ceiling with Elmer's Glue. ("Uncle, gawking, spilled his cup./ 'Wow!' he cried. 'Has pork gone up!'"). A few of the selections have a slightly grisly ring (specifically, in the case of Louise, who sneaks up on a snoozing bear), but it's all done in high humor, as are the slapstick black-and-white drawings that illustrate the spacious pages. Neatly crafted poetry that will be highly popular as well.

C.U. Language arts

Kotzwinkle, William. *The World Is Big and I'm So Small*; illus. by Joe Servello. Crown, 1986. ISBN 0-517-56310-X. 22p. \$10.95.

R 2-3 yrs. The art work here could have carried the weight of a wordless picture book. Softly blended colors and rounded shapes, with perspectives from a close-to-the-floor position, such as that of a toddler, depict a rabbit child's day at home, from waking up and washing, through play and "work" (pouring detergent all over the laundry piled on the floor), to bedtime. There's a strong sense of child's world here, and it's too bad the

verses are uneven, some jingly ("The world is big and I'm so small/ I'd better eat and grow up tall!") and others a bit cute. The illustrations, on the other hand, are full of warmth and respect, and will offer parents a rich opportunity to storytell the day's activities with lap-sitters.

Krementz, Jill. *Benjy Goes to a Restaurant*. ISBN 0-517-56166-2. 14p.

Taryn Goes to the Dentist. ISBN 0-517-56168-9. 16p.

Both books are written and illus. with photographs by Jill Krementz; Crown, 1986; \$3.95.

Ad
2-4
yrs.

A pedestrian effort from Krementz, these board books (see also below) describe toddler trips away from home. *Benjy* sounds like an old hand at eating out; digging into his endive and escarole, he announces, "When we eat out it takes a long time before dinner's ready. I order a salad so I'll have something to eat right away." *Taryn* suffers from a similar case of the cutes; after grinning her way through a dental exam and singing a song with the hygienist, she goes home and shows her new toothbrush to Daddy. "My baby sister Blaire wasn't interested but she doesn't have any teeth yet." The photographs seem posed, but they are colorful, and young children will find more in them than in the plodding, sometimes condescending texts.

D.V. Everyday life concepts

Krementz, Jill. *Jack Goes to the Beach*. ISBN 0-394-88001-3.

Lily Goes to the Playground. ISBN 0-394-87999-6.

Both books are written and illus. with photographs by Jill Krementz; Random House, 1986; 14p. \$3.95.

Ad
2-4
yrs.

Larger in format than the two reviewed above, these describe the same kinds of experiences. *Jack*, who seems to be the liveliest of the four subjects, has a fine time romping in the waves and building sandcastles. *Lily* (Krementz' own daughter) bounces her ball, plays in the sandbox, and climbs around on various playground equipment. The bland text occasionally bursts into rhyme: "When I go to the sandbox, I take my toys. I like to play with the girls and boys." While toddlers will enjoy the photographs and do love stories about their own adventures, the texts are more serviceable than imaginative.

D.V. Everyday life concepts

Lager, Marilyn. *Sigmund Freud: Doctor of the Mind*; illus. by Eric Lager. Enslow, 1986. ISBN 0-89490-117-6. 60p. \$10.95.

M
4-6

Although it is admittedly difficult to do justice to the complexities of Freud's life and work at an elementary school level, this biography is uneven on any scale of criteria. On the one hand, there is a commendable attempt to blend Freud's personal experiences with the methods he used to distill them into theories, as in the incident of incontinence at an early age that led to his dream of reconciliation with his father in the latter's old age. But there is also a mixture of undocumented and/or fictitious dialogue, no attempt to present latterday challenges to Freud's theories, and a number of incidental oddities (one story of Freud's curing a child's fear of horse bites is illustrated with the drawing of a horse!). What students will get here are bits of introductory information in a reasonably palatable if not terribly cohesive form. Appended are important dates in Freud's life, a list of books for further reading, and an index.

C.U. Psychology

Laroche, Sandra. *The Snow Rose*; written and illus. by Sandra and Michel Laroche. Holiday House, 1986. ISBN 0-8234-0594-X. 31p. \$12.95.

A sophisticated picture book that may appeal to children older than the apparent

R 5-8 yrs. audience, this follows the fortunes of a troubador who courts a princess, Ermina, through four tests of wit, one each season. Neither the undoing of a knot, the standing of an egg on its smallest end, nor the finding of a newly-fallen star satisfy the beautiful but cold-hearted princess, so that by the time she asks him to bring her a summersweet flower in the midst of winter, he turns to the innkeeper's daughter, Rose, who has kept him company through the year, and proposes marriage to her instead. Both language and art are considerably embellished with graceful flourishes a la eighteenth-century court styles. The oversize format allows expansive watercolor spreads of seasonal landscape, against which black-silhouetted figures appear with striking effect. Children who enjoy the more romantic fairy tales will be drawn to this.

Lauber, Patricia. *What Big Teeth You Have!* illus. by Martha Weston. Crowell, 1986. Library ed. ISBN 0-690-04507-7; Trade ed. ISBN 0-690-04506-9. 61p. Library ed. \$10.89; Trade ed. \$11.50.

R 3-5 In sharp contrast with Blocksma's *Amazing Mouths and Menus* (reviewed above), this has very clear organization, with four main types of mammal teeth clearly described and exemplified by groups of animals and their diets. Factual tidbits such as the self-sharpening action of beavers' teeth are included, along with information on the ever popular dinosaurs in a chapter following reptiles and fishes. The writing is smooth, the black-and-white illustrations well drawn and coordinated with the text. Indexed.

C.U. Biology

Lawson, Don. *An Album of the Vietnam War*. Watts, 1986. ISBN 0-531-10139-8. 90p. illus. with photographs. \$11.60.

Ad 5-8 In a succinct overview punctuated by margin headlines, Lawson recounts the French colonial background against which *Vietminh* resistance gained strength, follows the U.S. escalation of involvement and ultimate defeat, and outlines the effects of the war on the American public and political situation. The dramatic black-and-white news photos on almost every page are the kind that hold (and sometimes horrify) browsers and reluctant readers, who will find this an easier text than Hauptly's *In Vietnam* (reviewed in the February, 1986 issue) and even more heavily illustrated than Lawson's earlier Watts First Book, *The War in Vietnam*. Satisfactory as an additional source for reports or a summary introduction.

C.U. History—U.S.—Pictorial history

Lewis, Naomi. *Swan*; illus. by Deborah King. Lothrop, 1986. Library ed. ISBN 0-688-05535-4; Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-05534-6. 29p. Library ed. \$11.88; Trade ed. \$11.75.

R 2-4 A nature narrative that could be read aloud as a picture book to preschoolers, this follows the seasonal cycles of a pair of Bewick swans from their spring nesting in the Arctic tundra through the raising of the cygnets and their 2,600-mile flight south for wintering at a lake in Slimbridge (country unidentified). Opposite each page of text, averaging one or two paragraphs with plenty of white space to spare, is a graceful, full-page, color-pencil illustration of the swans in motion. These are fine-lined and subtly textured, giving a more sensual dimension to the bird and its environment than photographs would. They work on a level of fine art as well as information.

C.U. Nature study

Maestro, Betsy. *Ferryboat*; written and illus. by Betsy and Giulio Maestro. Crowell, 1986. Library ed. ISBN 0-690-04520-4; Trade ed. ISBN 0-690-04519-0. 30p. Library ed. \$11.89; Trade ed. \$11.95.

Sunny watercolor paintings in realistically detailed double-page spreads illustrate the

R way a family uses the ferry to cross the Connecticut River. Children who are familiar
K-2 with the procedure should enjoy this recreation of their experience, and others may be intrigued. This may also appeal to very young children who are in the any-vehicle-is-a-good-vehicle stage. An appended note gives historical information about the ferry on which the book is based, the Chester-Hadlyme Ferry, which began operating in 1769.
C.U. Transportation (unit)

Martell, Hazel. *The Vikings*; illus. by David Salariya and Shirley Willis. Warwick Press/Watts, 1986. ISBN 0-531-19008-0. 31p. (History as Evidence) \$10.90.

The text of this oversize book is printed in either two or three columns, usually a double column of larger print with long descriptive captions for illustrations in fine type. Despite the fact that pages are broken by pictures that cut across columns, the page layout is such that few pages seem as crowded as they usually do when this format is used. The text is profusely illustrated by maps, drawings, and photographs, and it gives a fairly comprehensive picture of Viking culture at home and abroad, where the travellers became settlers, traders, or marauders. Martell incorporates Norse history, gives facts about Vikings in England, on the continent, or in the New World. The writing style is adequate, the organization of material logical, the coverage broad. A glossary and an index are provided.

C.U. History—Europe; Social studies

Mitchell, Barbara. *Shoes for Everyone: A Story About Jan Matzeliger*; illus. by Hetty Mitchell. Carolrhoda, 1986. ISBN 0-87614-290-0. 59p. (Creative Minds) \$8.95.

After the initial reaction to this title (a biography of *who?*), one finds a compelling story of human endeavor. A clear text blessedly allows the extraordinary individual in focus, Jan Matzeliger, born of a white father and black mother in Dutch Guiana, 1852, to emerge without undue exclamatory adulation. A paradoxically brilliant but humble inventor, Matzeliger set out against all odds, including prejudice and hunger, to pursue his singular dream of making a shoe-lasting machine to replace the tedious, time-consuming hand sewing that held up manufacturing processes in his day. With his loneliness relieved only by church affiliations in Philadelphia and Lynn, Massachusetts, Matzeliger starved himself to collect the instruments and scraps of metal needed to experiment, and then saw most of the profits go to the investors who finally backed him after he managed to get a patent. This hero of black history and business enterprise will give readers a glimpse of the uncommon aspects of unknown figures.

Mother Goose. *Come Out to Play*; illus. by Jeanette Winter. Knopf, 1986. Library ed. ISBN 0-394-97742-2; Trade ed. ISBN 0-394-87742-X. 28p. Library ed. \$12.99; Trade ed. \$12.95.

Finely textured paintings that are strong in the architectural details of the background mix realistic and fanciful representation to illustrate the nursery rhyme that begins, "Girls and boys come out to play/ the moon is shining bright as day. . . ." A gnarled elf is the guide for a fanciful romp on a summer night. This has far more space devoted to pictures than to rhymes, and while the pictures are attractive, they tend to be repetitious in depicting the apartment houses of a Chicago neighborhood.

Mother Goose. *Solomon Grundy*; illus. by Susan Ramsay Hoguet. Dutton, 1986. ISBN 0-525-44239-1. 32p. \$11.95.

Although this is a rhyme often chanted to toddlers, the pictures here spin it into a more sophisticated life story of a man who lives from 1836 to 1910. The double-page watercolor spreads depict Solomon's parents immigrating from England, planting trees, and gazing fondly at their first child, born, of course, on a Monday. The following

pages show his christening, growing up, courtship and marriage (on a Wednesday), raising his own children, aging, and burial (on a Sunday). Period details are well-researched; framed compositions are brightly colored, sprightly with a large cast of characters populating each one, and patterned with slightly flattened shapes. An afterword about the story will help adults in narrating the events, which include a scene of Solomon's selling pies (his family business) to raise money for the Statue of Liberty's base at the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition. A book that teaches as it entertains.

C.U. History—U.S.—Pictorial presentation

O'Shea, Pat. *The Hounds of the Morrigan*. Holiday House, 1986. ISBN 0-8234-0595-8. 469p. \$15.95.

R
5-8 This robust fantasy, despite its length, reads almost effortlessly. Ten-year-old Pidge and his little sister Brigit are drawn into a battle between two ancient Irish spirits: the Dagda, "God of the earth and the life in it," and the Morrigan, "Goddess of Death and Destruction." The children's mission is to find and bring to the Dagda a small red pebble: it is a crystalized drop of Morrigan's blood, and her power will be invincible if she regains it. While the children's travels through the fairy world of Tir-na-nog have a predictable rhythm—magic spells and animal helpers turn up with monotonous regularity—each episode has great drama, and O'Shea's characterizations, many based on Irish folklore, are inventive and delightful. There's the earwig who thinks he's Napoleon ("Between life and death—zere is but a moment so—go for ze noses") a brave and loving fox, Pidge and Brigit ("five years old and five years daft") themselves. What is most remarkable is the ease and effectiveness with which O'Shea handles shifts in tone from the comic, almost burlesque, to the mythic—the Morrigan and her two alter-egos, Macha and Bodbh, cast spells and cause mischief with demented hilarity, yet in the final battle for the pebble (a tremendous scene) they become awesome, terrible monsters. "Even though the battle might go against her; she gloated that she had been its cause. She chanted for blood and flecks of foam fell from her lips." The prose is rather relentlessly ornamented, but the images are always concrete and, like the narrative, have vigorous strength.

Paulsen, Gary. *Sentries*. Bradbury, 1986. ISBN 0-02-770100-X. 165p. \$11.95.

Ad
7-10 Four distinct stories of teens facing maturing are interrupted by four "battle hymns"—vignettes from WWII, Vietnam, Korea, and, finally, nuclear holocaust. The stories are various (and variously successful): a girl on a Montana sheep ranch, a young Mexican migrant worker, an L.A. rock musician, and an assimilated Ojibway girl in Minnesota. Each of these characters is learning and preparing for adulthood, just as the men in the battle hymns learn to prepare for death. While thematic parallels between sections are strong and interesting enough to sustain the rather gimmicky structure, Paulsen uses a two-steps-forward, one-step-back stylistic repetition of language that is wearing, and makes these four very different young people seem too much alike. The final holocaust involves none of the characters (although by implication, all of them), describing instead some nursing Bengal tiger cubs in India. In all, this is the kind of curiosity some readers will find fascinating and meaningful, while others will dismiss it as pretentious and naive.

D.V. Growing up

Paxton, Arthur K. *Making Music*; written and illus. with photographs by Arthur K. Paxton. Atheneum, 1986. ISBN 0-689-31119-2. 46p. \$12.95.

Ad
3-6 yrs. A photo-documentary in picture book format follows David Amram from his first ideas of sound, through the composition of a new piece, to his conducting it on a concert tour. Friendly shots of musicians practicing at home and in rehearsal make the process more accessible than do formal presentations. One inventive sequence has a

sentence beginning, "The audience..." and then, stretched across a double-page spread, "...listened and listened and listened and listened and listened and listened," with closeups of an ear above each phrase—six ears neatly contrasted. The ending, in which David free-associates from the sound of rain to drums to clapping to remembering concerts is right on target, but unfortunately, the beginning leaves something to be desired. It implies that without training or background, "one day he just sat and imagined new sounds," which assumes too much knowledge for this young an audience. Also, a few of the introductory photos of the composer staring off into space are posed. Still, with something of the same aura as Kushkin's *The Philharmonic Gets Dressed*, this will fill a gap in books about music for the very young child.

C.U. Music—study and teaching

Perry, Robert L. *Computer Crime*. Watts, 1986. ISBN 0-531-10113-4. 66p. illus. \$9.40.

R
6-9 A computer consultant, Perry writes clearly and authoritatively about some of the legal, moral, and ethical problems relating to computers and computer crime. Often using illustrative examples, he cites accepted procedure and legislation to help readers decide the answer to some of the complex situations described—some real, some invented. The book discusses the various kinds of computer crimes: software piracy, hacking, embezzlement, hardware theft, espionage, etc. There is also a review of various safety devices or procedures that have been or are being developed. A glossary, a bibliography, and an index add to the usefulness of a book on a subject that should be of interest to many readers, especially those with home computers.

Pizzey, Steve. *The Computerized Society*; written by Steve Pizzey and Sheila Snowden. Bookwright Press/Watts, 1986. ISBN 0-531-18039-5. 47p. illus. \$10.40.

Ad
3-5 A brief overview of the ways computers facilitate almost every aspect of contemporary society, from the grocery-store checkout counter to the development of artificial intelligence. At times the style suffers from the inanity of generalization ("The advantage of learning to fly a jumbo jet by computer is obvious—crashing real planes is dangerous and expensive!"). The color photographs are abundant and adequate, although sometimes oddly chosen, as in the apprehensive expression on the face of a cook storing her recipes in a computer. On the other hand, there's enough straightforward information here to satisfy students doing reports on what is becoming a frequent assignment; for this purpose, the table of contents, clearly headlined format, and index, with a glossary and brief list of juvenile books for further reading, will be most useful.

Root, Phyllis. *Soup for Supper*; illus. by Sue Truesdell. Harper, 1986. Library ed. ISBN 0-06-025071-2; Trade ed. ISBN 0-06-025070-4. 26p. Library ed. \$10.89; Trade ed. \$11.50.

R
4-6 yrs. An original story with a folkloric ring, this will make dandy reading aloud because of the simple rhymes, name-calling, and sound effects. The conflict is between an old woman tending her garden and a giant, Rumbleton, who pulls up all her vegetables to make soup. She in turn chases after him shouting "potato nose" and other epithets, whereupon he throws all the vegetables at her and she gathers them up in her "wide, wide apron." They're pretty heavy. Shamefaced, he offers her a ride in his wheelbarrow, and the two start chopping and cooking ("Watch out, you turnip brain," the wee small woman scolded... "Do I look like a bunch of carrots to you?"). The happy ending is sufficiently spiced with the two characters' quirks to keep from being sentimental but is resounding nevertheless: "Soup with cabbage, soup with carrot—/ A pot of soup and a friend to share it." The full-color illustrations, too, lend plenty of ironic humor in depicting these unlikely neighbors. Their oddball expressions and ridiculous postures lend to the traditional country-side setting a fresh air of absurdity.

C.U. Reading aloud

Ross, Tony. *Lazy Jack*; written and illus. by Tony Ross. Dial, 1986. ISBN 0-8037-0275-2. 26p. \$11.95.

R
4-6
yrs. Ross' spacious watercolors add narrative twists of their own to this traditional tale from Joseph Jacobs' *English Fairy Tales*. A milkmaid misses the pail, for instance, as she gawks at Jack pouring from a giant pitcher on his back; the tails of various species trail out of a sausage grinder as Jack heedlessly turns the crank. After each job, he ruins the day's payment by bringing it home the way his mother advised him to carry the previous day's reward—a jug of milk poured into his pocket where he should have carried yesterday's gold coin; a cheese melting on his head where he should have carried the jug of milk, etc. The tale is tongue-in-cheek, the art absurd, the overall effect a super-silly read-aloud and perfect accompaniment for the popular southern variant, "Epaminondas."

Schoberle, Cecile. *Beyond the Milky Way*; written and illus. by Cecile Schoberle. Crown, 1986. ISBN 0-517-55716-9. 28p. \$9.95.

Ad
3-5
yrs. As a little girl gazes out her window, past the buildings, above an airplane, into the Milky Way, she imagines another girl on a faraway planet looking out *her* window, past the buildings, above the spaceships. . . imagining a little girl on earth, looking out her window. Gently and briefly told, the logic of this novel bedtime story is persuasive and appealing. The art is less successful: while a few of the spreads are nicely drawn from a unique, rather giddy perspective, most of the full-color illustrations are overly mannered, done in a slick retro style with Flash Gordon spaceships and other thirties trappings.

D.V. Imaginative powers

Schweninger, Ann. *Birthday Wishes*; written and illus. by Ann Schweninger. Viking, 1986. ISBN 0-670-80742-7. 30p. \$9.95.

R
3-6
yrs. It's bunny Buttercup's birthday, and this cheerful story, entirely narrated by ballooned dialogue, takes us all the way from "Getting Ready" to "Opening Presents." An ordinary situation, but Schweninger catches the inherent suspense ("Maybe on my birthday I'll open a big box. . . and there will be skates inside!") and humor—brother Buster's all-too-familiar torment of having to buy Buttercup a present *she* would like, instead of a baseball bat or toy robot. There's a nice variety in the beautifully colored illustrations—from several small scenes on a page, to a glowing double-page spread of a toy shop overflowing with possible presents. Ideal for pre-readers—the pictures will carry them right through.

Shore, Laura Jan. *The Sacred Moon Tree: Being the True Account of the Trials and Adventures of Phoebe Sands in the Great War Between the States, 1861-1865*. Bradbury, 1986. ISBN 0-02-782790-9. 209p. \$13.95.

Ad
6-8
yrs. Phoebe is eleven when she begins her story of a family divided by the Civil War; after her parents quarrel, Papa joins the Union Army, and Mama goes to Richmond to help her family—and, Phoebe suspects, to spy for the confederacy. Hair cut and dressed in a boy's clothes, Phoebe sets out with her friend Jotham to rescue Jotham's brother from Libby Prison. The protagonist is spunky, the story has historical significance and plenty of action; but it often seems crowded with incidents of which only some contribute to furthering the plot or developing characterization. No single incident is unbelievable, but there's a plethora of coincidence in the total. The writing style shows promise but is marred by an occasional anachronism—such as a reference to "truth serum."

C.U. History—U.S.

D.V. Courage

Singer, Marilyn. *Where There's a Will, There's a Wag*; illus. by Andrew Glass. Holt, 1986. ISBN 0-03-005747-7. 79p. \$11.95.

M 3-5 A fairly farfetched premise leads to ever more unlikely events as a cardshark named Hy Stakes hooks Philip Barlowe and his canine partner, Sam(antha) Spayed into tracking down a lost will that Hy Stakes conjectures his rich aunt wrote before she died. There's a big cast of characters running around missing clues here, all pretty functional; the wise-cracking dog and obvious villains may, however, be just what readers enjoy in a spoof on formula mysteries. Like the two previous books in the series, *The Fido Frame-Up* and *A Nose for Trouble*, this features black-and-white hatch drawings by Andrew Glass.

Sullivan, George. *Baseball Backstage*. Holt, 1986. ISBN 0-03-00785-5. 114p. illus. with photographs. \$11.95.

R 6-9 Backstage revelations have their own appeal, and to the baseball buff, this behind-the-scenes look at a major league team should be interesting. For Yankee fans, it will be enthralling, for the text consists of interviews with a dozen members of the organization's support staff, from the general manager to the head groundskeeper and the oldest clubhouse attendant. The format produces plenty of anecdotal material in addition to the information it gives. Sullivan, a practiced sports writer, adroitly asks brief questions that elicit long, chatty answers.

Tafari, Nancy. *Who's Counting?* written and illus. by nancy Tafari. Greenwillow, 1986. Library ed. ISBN 0-688-06131-1; Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-06130-3. 23p. Library ed. \$11.88; Trade ed. \$11.75.

R 3-5 yrs. One brown puppy is counting: one squirrel, two birds, three moles, etc. Each number gets a two-page spread, and Tafari uses the long horizontal space to beautiful advantage. Four geese, for example, are stark white with orange beaks and feet, stretching across a bright green background. In the most dramatic spread, two birds, one red, one yellow, perch in an intense close-up on a flowered tree limb that reaches back and high over a meadow, puppy looking up from below. The puppy appears in each picture, sometimes readily seen, sometimes not so apparent, giving this excellent counting book continuity, as well as the additional pleasure of hide and seek.

C.U. Counting (unit)

Turner, Gwenda. *Playbook*; written and illus. by Gwenda Turner. Viking, 1986. ISBN 0-670-80660-9. 29p. \$9.95.

R 1-3 yrs. A prime selection for preparing the intimidated or sharing with the enthusiastic youngster about to set off to day care or nursery school for the first time. The opening page shows a friendly, frumpled, and—most important—motherly woman reading to a couchful of five children. "Miss Williams is our teacher." The atmosphere gets more crowded but no less homey as the first-person-plural narrative enumerates all the activities of painting, sand box, baking, cut-out, building, dress-up, music, eating, and indoor/outdoor games that keep the children busy all day long. The primary element here is, of course, the art, which elaborates with delicately realistic detail and inventively varied page design each child's absorption. A tears-and-comfort scene would have been helpful somewhere in there, but this has plenty of potential for a parent's storytelling what is to come or a child's storytelling what has happened during his or her own day.

Wallace, Bill. *Ferret in the Bedroom, Lizards in the Fridge*. Holiday House, 1986. ISBN 0-8234-0600-8. 132p. \$10.95.

In her bid for sixth-grade class presidency, Liz Robbins has two counts against her:

Ad 5-7 an obnoxious, manipulative, but pretty opponent, and a house full of unusual animals that perpetually alienate the friends she tries to win over. There are scenes here that will royally entertain the target audience in spite of several technical flaws. Young readers will find it hilarious when a turtle pees on one squeamish girl's chest and an ibex butts another from behind. There are also a few telling moments, as when Liz talks to a red-tail hawk's empty cage; or when she gives her campaign speech renouncing standard measures of popularity for a return of the animals that she had persuaded her zoologist father to remove. A number of characters' reactions are overplayed, however. An elderly couple almost runs down Liz in their car because they think her pet ferret is a rat, and there's too much obvious advance notice for a new boy's interest in Liz' menagerie. The issue raised, of individuality vs. peer acceptance, is nevertheless an immediate one for this age group. Wallace gains points for having his protagonist find self-acceptance rather than acceptance as class president; her opponent wins.

D.V. Individuality, expressing

Warner, Elizabeth, ad. *Heroes, Monsters and Other Worlds from Russian Mythology*; illus. by Alexander Koshkin. Schocken, 1986. ISBN 0-8052-4007-1. 132p. (World Mythology Series) \$15.95.

Ad 5-7 One of a series of "World Mythologies," this oversize book presents a selection of Russian tales, arranged by theme (Man and the elements, Wondrous animals, Giants and midgets, etc.) with a discussion of the themes introducing each section, and with some general information preceding the index at the back of the book. The oversize pages are profusely illustrated with many dramatic black-and-white drawings and with full-page paintings that are lushly romantic, usually in a composition too crowded to be effective. This should be of some interest to students of folk literature; for the general reader the style of the forty-three retellings may seem rather flat.

Wilson, Jacqueline. *How to Survive Summer Camp*; illus. by Bob Dewar. Oxford/Merrimack, 1986. ISBN 0-19-271504-6. 160p. \$9.95.

Ad 4-6 In a book first published in England, Stella (an inventive and inveterate trouble-maker) tells the story of her participation in "Evergreen Adventure Holidays." Her mother, going on a honeymoon with her second husband, has enrolled a whining, obdurate Stella for the summer. The story has plenty of action, all of a small-scale dormitory-catastrophe or lampooning-the-staff type. There's the usual assortment of campers: the fat girl, the shy boy, the wealthy snob. Occasionally somebody is pleasant to Stella, but not often. Actually (and few readers of camping stories will be surprised) Stella manages to have a good time, although she won't admit it. The illustrations are caricatures in the style of John Held of the Flapper Era.

Wolff, Ashley. *A Year of Beasts*; written and illus. by Ashley Wolff. Dutton, 1986. ISBN 0-525-44240-5. 31p. \$10.95.

R 1-4 yrs. A showcase for Wolff's dramatic paintings underscores the concept of seasonal cycles with a full-page or double-page spread illustrating the animals that appear near a family's rural home each month of the year. The artist's signature use of heavy black line to define strong shapes and colors is used with organic cohesion here; the pages flow within and among themselves to create a sense of time and nature also flowing in patterns. A satisfying book to share with toddlers, who can identify the animals in the pictures and name those around their own homes as well.

C.U. Seasons (unit)

Wood, Phyllis Anderson. *Then I'll Be Home Free*. Dodd, 1986. ISBN 0-396-08766-3. 238p. \$12.95.

M
7-9 Rosemary, sixteen, didn't remember her parents, since they had died when she was very young. She lived in great amity with her grandparents, Della and Arthur. It was a shock when Della died after what seemed a mild heart attack; not only was it hard to adjust to the loss, it was also painful to see Arthur almost catatonic with grief. When he attempted suicide, Rosie had a double burden. She found that her childhood friend, Kevin, was a great help. She also found herself responding to Kevin's newly-expressed love. A dog helped Grandpa Arthur regain interest in life. This is a hackneyed plot, predictable in development and slight in characterization; it deals realistically with the protagonist's adjustment to death, but it lacks depth or originality, and it is written in a mediocre style exemplified by "Rosemary and Della exchanged a secret success sign between themselves."

D.V. Death, adjustment to; Grandfather-child relations

Yolen, Jane, ed. *The Lullaby Songbook*; musical arrangements by Adam Stemple; illus. by Charles Mikolaycak. Harcourt, 1986. ISBN 0-15-249903-2. 29p. \$12.95.

R
1-5
yrs. Although this is a beautiful book, both in selection and illustration, it is really more for parents who will be singing the lullabies than for the children listening to them (the latter are supposed to have their eyes closed). Nevertheless, assuming that parent and child are propped up in bed or rocker with the book, paging through it, they will find fifteen traditional sleepy songs, from as many different times or cultures, with music for piano and guitar. Mikolaycak's deep-toned illustrations frame each double-page spread in figures and motifs appropriate to the particular song; "Hush Little Baby," for instance, is rimmed with a quilting pattern in autumn shades and studded with pictures of a mockingbird, billy goat, hound dog, and cart and bull. Brief background notes accompany the selections, which include "All Through the Night," "Bye Baby Bunting," "All the Pretty Little Horses," "Cum By Yah," and others.

C.U. Music

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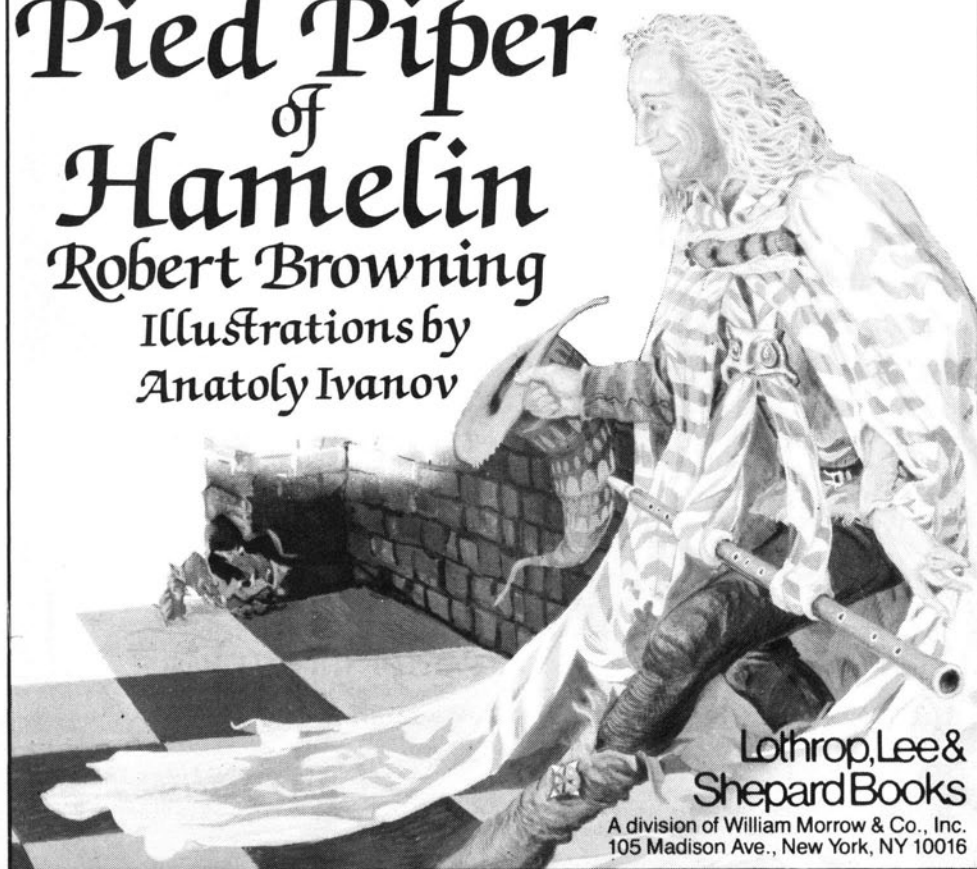
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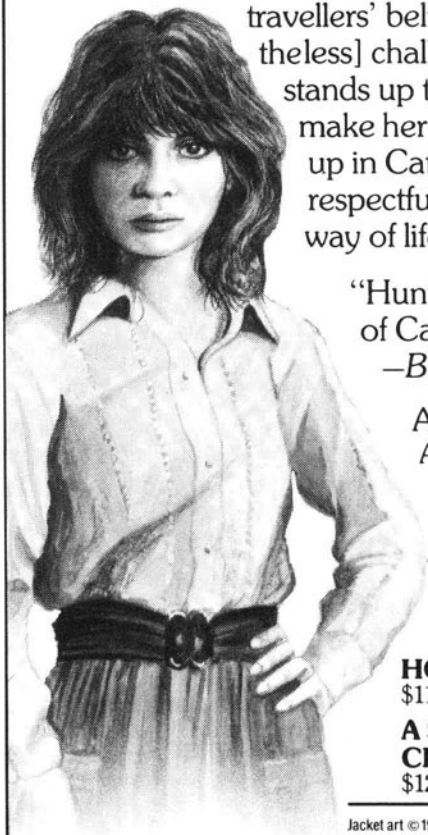
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